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RUEHBL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 PARIS 001938

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TAGS PREL, FR, EUN, PGOV, ETRD, UK, GM, TU, PINR

SUBJECT: UK READOUT OF BLAIR-SARKOZY MEETING

Classified By: PolMC Josiah Rosenblatt for reasons 1.4 (B & D).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: UK PM Blair's May 11 meeting with French President-elect Sarkozy focused primarily on next steps on the EU constitutional trea

¶2. (C) POL M/C and Deputy met May 14 with UK Embassy DCM Tim Hitchens for a readout of UK PM Tony Blair's May 11, late-afternoon meeting with

MOVING THE EU FORWARD

¶3. (C) Hitchens confirmed press reports that the discussions focused primarily on how to overcome the EU's current blockage on institutional r

¶4. (C) POL M/C asked if Merkel would be speaking for the 18 countries that have ratified the current draft constitutional treaty. Hitchens res FOUR UK CONCERN; SARKOZY CLOSE ON THREE

¶5. (C) On substance, Hitchens described four UK "conditions" for reaching an agreement, on three of which he believed that the UK and France c PARIS 00001938 002 OF 003 reflection, Hitchens speculated that Sarkozy was using the idea as a negotiating ploy that would please his French domestic audience. Finally, TURKEY THE TOUGHEST NUT

¶6. (C) On Turkey, Hitchens described Blair's position as wanting to ensure that Turkey's accession negotiations would continue uninterrupted, LITTLE ON TRADE

¶7. (C) Hitchens said there was no in-depth discussion of trade. He said the UK supported the role of EC Commissioner Mandelson, whereas Sarkoz NO ESDP

¶8. (C) On European defense, Hitchens noted that, surprisingly, there had been no discussion.  
SARKOZY AND EUROPE

¶9. (C) Asked about the impact of Sarkozy on Europe more generally, Hitchens expressed hope for a better UK-French working relationship, altho ORIGINS OF MEETING

¶10. (C) Hitchens said the idea of a meeting came up during one of Blair's and Sarkozy's phone conversations, with Blair offering to meet Sark PARIS 00001938 003 OF 003 SARKOZY-BLAIR, -MERKEL, -BROWN

¶11. (C) Hitchens said the chemistry between Blair and Sarkozy was good, much because they related to each other as politicos. Over the years, MEETING WITH CHIRAC

¶12. (C) Hitchens described Blair's meeting with Chirac as uneventful. Chirac spoke as an old friend, noting that the UK and France sometimes i Please visit Paris' Classified Website at: <http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/paris/index.cfm> STAPLETON